

The Disciple

A Magazine for Unitarians and other Christian People.

Nemo Christianus, nisi discipulus.

MICHAEL SERVETUS.

A Year's End.

FOR twelve months the *Disciple* has steadily persevered in its efforts to supply the vacant place of a periodical devoted to the interests of the Nonsubscribing Churches. Its appearance was received with a most cordial welcome not only in Ireland, but in England, and in America, and elsewhere. Journals published in such widely separated places as Manchester, London, Budapest, Boston, and Chicago, gave appreciative notices of its spirit and contents, and complimented its publishers on the excellence of its general get-up. The list of its regular subscribers contains evidence of its circulation in several foreign countries, and among various denominations, though the bulk of its supporters are naturally found in the country of its birth, and in the churches whose point of view it especially aims to represent. Its projectors are satisfied that it has done good; and they are anxious both to increase the worth, and to extend the circulation of the Magazine, during the coming year.

Arrangements are in progress for making additionally prominent a feature of the *Disciple*, which experience proves to have been specially attractive. The occasional sketches from life, and short stories which have appeared, have always been popular. In future numbers this element will be regularly represented, and probably in a serial form. For household and fireside reading, this portion of the Magazine will be peculiarly adapted.

The literary interest of the Magazine will also be augmented by the introduction of a special department devoted to brief Notices of Books. We do not propose that these notices shall be confined to works on theological, or distinctively religious subjects; they will embrace also the topics of science and general literature; the object being, to direct the attention of our readers to good books, recently published.

The series of Notes of Sunday School Lessons, from the early part of the Old Testament narrative, comes to a close with the present month. This will be followed by a new series, on the *Life of Christ*; in a form somewhat differing from the Old Testament Lessons, and serving the purpose of a concise continuous commentary, of an elementary character, on the Gospel of St. Luke.

Much consideration has been given by the conductors of the *Disciple* to the subject of Local Intelligence. It is felt by many that a larger space devoted to this department would make the Magazine more interesting, especially to the members of congregations in the country. Though we cannot engage to search out news of this sort, we shall gladly promise to find room for all that may be kindly sent to us; and henceforth this portion of the contents of the Magazine will appear distinct and disconnected from the general Ecclesiastical Summary.

Our publishing day has heretofore been the 1st of each month, and we have hitherto kept closely to this day. But we find that this rule is attended with some inconvenience to subscribers at a distance. We shall, therefore, in future *publish earlier*, so as to allow the Magazine to be in the hands of all our Agents on or before the 1st day of the month.

This will compel us to have in hand all Paragraphs of News, Advertisements, &c., at an earlier date. They must reach us by the 20th of the month at latest, otherwise we cannot guarantee their insertion.

The terms of subscription will remain as before, *half-a-crown* a year, or *three shillings* by post, if paid *before the end of January*.

A title page and table of contents for 1881 will appear with the January number.

We venture to express a hope that the arrangements here announced will prove acceptable to our subscribers, and contribute to the enhanced success of the Magazine. Warmly thanking all our friends for the ungrudging assistance and support during the current year, we ask them kindly to bring the Magazine under the notice of others, and to recommend it with a favourable word. They may thus enable us, by increasing our subscribers, to command a larger public in the future. This we should be glad to do, believing that the leading aim of our enterprise has been faithfully carried out, and that the matter placed before our readers is such as will commend it to the general body of those who desire to unite a thoroughly Christian position, with a liberal treatment of theological and critical topics.

Writing, for the most part, as Unitarians, our object has been so to present our views, that those who may not agree with everything which we advance, may nevertheless feel that in spirit we are animated by a singlehearted devotion to the Master's cause. We place the interests of our common Christianity before all other claims; and as in name, so in fact, we desire to maintain towards Christ the attitude of the zealous and reverent Disciple.

Stories for the Christmas Time.

THE LOST.

I SAW in the street, not very long ago, an individual whose appearance interested me so much that I could not but pause on my way past him, and regard him with a large measure of "critical inspection." He was evidently one who had been "void of understanding." He was ragged, and almost shoeless; his hat was battered and torn, his beard unshaven, his hair unkempt, and he was "out," both at the knees and at the elbows. His condition was in terrible contrast with that of the comfortably clad and respectable people who moved to and fro on the street in which he stood. A child, passing with its mother, clung convulsively to the maternal skirts as it came near to the woeful and unsavoury figure, at which a dog had just sniffed, and then passed hurriedly away.

The object of my attention held in the long and taper fingers of a not unshapely hand, an old flute, dirty, and black looking as himself and his fortunes. On one of the fingers was a ring—it was of brass—a sign, as it seemed to me, that low as he had sunk, he had not forgotten some of the little and excusable vanities of an affluent time. His tall and stalwart figure he bore erect. I caught his eye just as he raised his flute to his lips, but that organ gave no sign. Its owner clearly was not unaccustomed to the inquisitive gaze of strangers. Mine was a compassionate glance, yet I could not, after I had passed him, a few yards, but feel that somehow my thought and feeling, and the accompanying look that had perchance revealed them, had struck a tender chord within the man; for from the old flute, sweet, soft, and low, came "The light of other days." It was a very suggestive air under the circumstances, and I leaned against a pillar that was at hand, to listen and to think.

As I listened, my imagination took wing, and I saw "the light of other days" gleaming on golden hair that lay upon a mother's breast. I saw it on a group of happy, playful children, on the beaming faces of hopeful parents, on a noble boyhood, on a gifted and loved and very promising manhood; but then came portentous shadows, and the lights of home grew dim, as other lights flared up. To wit, those of the tap-room, of the music saloon, and of the gambler's hell! And then I saw by other lights, the homeward stagger in the early morn; the disgraceful street brawl; the police station; the dismal and crowded law court. And then I heard the conviction that brought the agonising cry to a mother's lips, "My son! my son!!" I saw the door of the banking-house closed against that son; a father, and a mother, and a sister, on their knees before him, striving by their tears and words of anguish to exorcise the demon that was hurrying him to poverty and to degradation, and them to unutterable sorrow and shame. Then I saw that for a time there was a stop in his downward career, but that it was only for a time; for soon the restraints that held him for that time burst asunder, "as a

thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire," and I saw him give himself again to old associates, to old haunts, to the drunkards' and the outcasts' life.

As I moved away from the spot on which I had halted, my fancy completed the yet untold tale of the wretched man's life. I saw him wander on his dreadful way, tattered, homeless, and without a friend. I saw him carried to a sick bed in the workhouse, and lie without one pitying face near to him, loathed by his attendants, and dying; in his last moments tortured by the light of other days, that gleams so often, on the often briefly restored vision of "the prodigal," ere his eyes are closed in death!

The life that precedes such a death is not "a tale signifying nothing." It is terribly significant! It is not "a walking shadow," but an awfully real thing. Life is not a mere "stage," whose shifting scenes, and men and women, are "got up" for occasion; its pitfalls are no mere mechanical contrivances into which men drop, and then come out unscathed, and be as they had been before. Man is not a mere "player," for he acts no borrowed part; he plays that which is his own, be it the part of a hypocrite, of a knave, or of a man of principle; and as he plays he is moulded gradually, and more and more fully, into shape of good or ill; so that when the curtain falls, he bears with him the character he played, it is in him, it is himself; and when he "passes on," it makes "a heaven of hell, or hell of heaven." Alas! for the vagrant flute-player, who must have often felt and said, when under the power of his degrading habit, but ere the brain had become imbruted with the drunkard's potion, in the words of the Satan of Milton, "To be weak is miserable, doing or suffering. Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell." Alas! for those at home whose enemies he, in effect, has been; who had been "wounded by an arrow from the quiver of a brother," and alas! for her who can say, "he lay upon my lap, I crooned to him the cradle song."

How awful is sin! How destructive it is! How injurious to the powers that lift men above the beasts that perish! How ruinous to the peace of society, and to individual peace! How hostile to all true thought and feeling, and purpose; to the elevation of man, as a moral and a spiritual being; to the soul; to God's image, within; and to all near relationship with the Great and Pure Spirit who made and rules the universe, and who destines us for the eternal life, which only sin can destroy!

THE LOST AND THE FOUND.

It was a stately mansion, and lights shone through its large, frost-covered windows; and the grass on the lawn, and the trees in which the mansion and its grounds were embosomed, glittered with frost in the bright moonlight. The cold out of doors was intense, but Christmas-eve fires were in every room within; and the large stove in the spacious hall roared in deepest basso to the light and

irregular treble of a troop of romping children whose faces glowed under the united influences of frolic and of fire. Upstairs, in the drawing-room, in her arm-chair, sat a matron, the grandmother of the children, and she and the mothers of the little flock below, were awaiting the arrival of eagerly-expected and much-loved guests. And soon was heard the sound of wheels, and the quick stroke of horses' hoofs; and soon "Merry Christmas" greetings rang through the hall. The children passed up the staircase and into the drawing-room, followed by two stalwart men, the sons of the matron, and her anticipated guests. They had won high names and places in the world. Their mother rejoiced; she gloried in their success, they "praised her in the gates," they "arose up and called her blessed."

To her sons and daughters-in-law, and to their children, that Christmas-eve was a happy one, but to her it was not one of unalloyed happiness, for ever and anon a tear would steal into her eye when she thought of one who was not as his brothers were, "home again," and in regard to whom "years of rebellion could not blot her affection out." It was only, however, when she retired to her bedroom and when she was seated by its fire, that she allowed her tears to flow freely, and her thoughts to follow continuously the wanderer from his home, who had not perchance that night "where to lay his head!" The picture her fancy drew of his desolate condition filled her heart with agony, and as it rose before her she lifted up her voice and wept. Then she prayed in words of burning entreaty, to the Great Father, through the "Man of Sorrows" "who knew no sin" yet who himself had been sorely tried, and who knew the power of temptation, for her absent son who had, she confessed, sinned exceedingly; she asked not, however, for bare justice from Him whose ways are "just and true," but for pardon, and for help to bring him to himself, to his home, to Christ, and to that Heaven at last, in which there are "many mansions," and room for all!

The anguish of the matron was not unmarked by her favourite grandchild, the little Effie, who for the night was to share her bed, and who, moved by the tears and cries she had heard, rolled out of the bed with a book in hand, whose illustrated pages she had been scanning in the imperfect light of a too distant lamp.

"O Grandmamma," said the child, "I've such a story to read to you, out of one of the Christmas books you so kindly gave to me this morning. Please allow me to read it. I don't know exactly all that it is about as yet, but here it is, and it isn't long."

The matron on this turned her attention to the child, whom she kissed, drew close to herself and to the fire, and then bade the little apostle of good read on.

And the child read a story of a girl who had lived with a widowed mother in a sweet cottage which lay in a sweetly sheltered spot, where the trees were richly foliated and beautiful, and a "burnie" ran murmuring by, and where the fields around were very green and the flowers and the sweet singing birds were many. And moreover the story told that the girl was very fair to look upon, and that she was

gentle and very good, the life and light of her mother's home, and the admiration of all the people of the neighbourhood.

But alack! alack! as the story also told, a wooer came; and her love blinded her judgment, and she loved "not wisely but too well," and thus at length by his insinuating art the man wiled away the too fond and the too trusting girl from her mother's home and to the great city, where she ere long found herself deceived, betrayed, deserted, and thrown, poor, helpless, and hapless thing, upon the world; and it told how bitterly she wept, and how more than once she thought of "the dark river," and then how she battled with and overcame many a tempting thought to do wrong, and of her struggle with want, and how the battle went against her, but that neither cold nor hunger bore so hard upon her as the thought of the overwhelming misery which she felt must be on her mother because of her child's desertion, and her fall from an estate that had been without reproach; and it told how terrible was the girl's remorse and how agonising her reflective shame! "What shall I do, whither shall I fly from this place and its cheerless streets and its hard un pitying faces?" cried the lonely and helpless one in her agony.

At length, a suggestion came, and it came from that sacred Book which she had so often read at her mother's knee, and that now helped her to a purpose, and a language in which to express it: "I will arise and go" unto my mother; and she arose and went on her homeward way, and after days of weary travel she stood in the pale moonlight before her mother's home; and that home looked to her so quiet and so beautiful, that the very peace of God itself seemed to be over it, and she felt, as she in humility approached its door, as if she were with feet profane treading on hallowed ground. "Mother," she cried, "I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy child; receive me in the old home, even as a servant, and I shall be more than content and bless thee for ever!"

She touched the door as she spoke: it was off the latch: her mother had allowed it to be so, since she fled; and to her touch it opened, and she fell into her mother's arms; and the mother welcomed and blessed her child as she pillowed her head upon her breast! "Be of good cheer," said the weeping parent, "thy faith in me hath rightly led thee hither; and not only has my door been off the latch, and is, for thee, but for every returned one the door of Heaven itself is ever, and ever has been so; for when God's child, His 'offspring,' whom He 'so loves,' burthened with self-reproach, and having forsaken every evil way, and every evil thought, returns to Him, he may touch the door, enter, and he shall hear the Father's voice, 'Come up hither.'"

Just as the closing words of her story fell from the child's lips, upon the "midnight air" arose a chant of the Christmas Waits, and thus it ran: "And the Angel said unto them, 'Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, who

is Christ the Lord.' . . . And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will toward men.' God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son, who shall subdue all things unto himself. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him, for He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust. When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Hallelujah ! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth ; the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever ! Hallelujah !"

"Heaven itself," said the matron, as the last notes of the chant died away, "that makes even the winds its messengers to man, seems on this hallowed morn to breathe purposely even through these humble minstrels words of hope and courage and holy cheer into the soul. God has a thousand ways that we do not dream of, here and hereafter, to instruct, strengthen, regenerate, and save, and I can and I do believe that here and now is revealed a part of His merciful and beneficent ways of calling us to Himself."

Assured of this she went to sleep, and she dreamt that she had "passed on," towards the divine streams and vales above, where she saw her son, and heard his words of entreaty, of penitence, remorse, and shame ; and that she saw the door open ; and in the hush of a great multitude which she had joined, and that stood before the throne, she heard a voice, with whose sweetness Heaven was filled, which said, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, for this my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found ;" and that she joined with the fathers and mothers and the sisters and brothers of "lost" ones redeemed, who were singing, "Hallelujah ! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth ; the kingdoms of the world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. Hallelujah !"

Dr. Parr.

FEW literary men enjoyed more fame in their time than did Dr. Parr with his contemporaries ; but, though he flourished only a generation or two since, very few names are now less known to the general public. The writer of these lines was, several years ago, travelling on a stage coach ; and on coming to Hatton, remarked to a fellow passenger, apparently a well informed man, "This is the village in which Dr. Parr flourished." "Parr, who was he ? I never heard of him." We have subsequently found this ignorance by no means uncommon. Persons from whom we had expected better things, have confounded Samuel Parr, one of the most conspicuously

learned men of his day, with Thomas Parr, "Old Parr," half mythical, and with no pretensions to celebrity save reputed longevity.

Yet was Samuel Parr no common man, and he lived not so remote from our own age as to make him the subject of little more than tradition. He was on terms of familiarity with most of the leading characters of his remarkable and very busy times; had dined with George IV., when Prince of Wales, and even disputed with him at table; and had been a favourite with his unfortunate queen, Caroline of Brunswick. Parr had conversed with the great Dr. Johnson, and drawn from him the hearty remark, "Parr, Sir, is a fair man," meaning a fair disputant. He was the intimate friend of Priestley, and he corresponded in the most cordial manner with Belsham, Rees, and other great lights of Liberal Dissent. His learning, especially in the dead languages, was of a gigantic kind—Hebrew, Greek, Latin, were nearly as familiar to him as his native English. Though a beneficed clergyman, he was tolerant, and very courteous to Nonconformists. One of these, a venerated Unitarian minister, wrote his life. It may be remarked by the way that William Field's *Life of Parr* is a work full of entertainment, almost Boswellian throughout.

Parr was, in externals, a very high churchman, fond of an ornate service, together with painted windows, and melodious bells. He beautified, much at his own cost, the old parish church at Hatton, and one of his great delights was to sit in his garden listening to the bells from the tower—"How sweet the music of the village bells." Yet was he never understood to be very orthodox in his views. We think his views on the Trinity were Sabellian, and, on other points of theology, most certainly Arminian.

In politics, Parr was Liberal, and to an extent which his clerical brethren, at least the great majority of them, thought extreme. Of his opinions he never made any secret. He was a determined opponent of Pitt's policy, both foreign and domestic; and whilst he deprecated everything like riot and tumult, his sympathies were ever with those whom he thought the victims of oppression. Hence he felt deeply for the "Scotch martyrs," Muir, Skirving, Margarot and Fyshe Palmer, and did what he could to mitigate their sufferings. Reform of Parliament, and Catholic emancipation, were burning questions in politics throughout his days. He did not live to see the triumph of either of these schemes, but his best exertions were not wanting to further their success. He was with Romilly and Mackintosh in their labours to modify the criminal code of England; and if he did not go the entire length of death-punishment abolition, he shrank with horror from the executions which, twice in the year, followed the assizes throughout the country. "Let us make haste out of this slaughter-house," he exclaimed to a friend, after hearing several sentenced to death in one of these courts. In some affecting cases he was successful in getting persons guilty of light offences reprieved from the gallows, and in all such he spared neither time, nor expense, nor entreaty to accomplish his purpose.

Dr. Parr passed through exciting and most troublous times. He always stoutly weathered the storm. In his quiet, rural retreat at Hatton, it would have been imagined that his tranquility was secured. It was not so. The disgraceful riots at Birmingham, within twenty miles of his own house, were heard and felt there, not to his personal harm, but so as to give great cause for uneasiness. But he was not depressed. He roused himself to the occasion, and poured his fiery words on the savage and unprincipled system then in operation, which brought such terrible evils on so many innocent people, and revived the same fell spirit which prevailed at the St. Bartholomew massacre. He eloquently defended the character of the injured Priestley, the philosopher, the "Patriot, Saint and Sage." Of a person who had, in Parr's presence, spoken slightly of Priestley, he said afterwards—"Only think of him, that he should have presumed to talk so before me, before me, Sir, of my friend, Dr. Priestley;" and for the expatriated theologian and reformer he ever retained the sincerest regard.

The father of Parr was a respectable medical practitioner in Norfolk, and desired to bring up Samuel to the same profession, but his son's earnest wish was to enter the ministry. As a boy he was fond of display, was accustomed to harangue from a chair, and to receive applause from his father's friends. This, Mr. Field remarks, probably laid the foundation for "that excess of vanity and self-complacency" which marked him through life; for his egotism was always equal to his learning, and both were very great. We have an amusing instance of his inordinate self-appreciation in his reply to a gentleman who asked him, who were the greatest Greek scholars in England? "Porson," replied Parr, is undoubtedly the *first*, the *third* is Charles Burney; I will leave *you* to name the *second*.

The young man's rising ambition was gratified by his being sent to Cambridge. Leaving Cambridge with high honours, Parr, having been ordained, was soon elected second master of Harrow School. Here he received as a pupil the clever and eccentric Sheridan, with whom, owing to his pupil's school-boy love of adventure, he must have had considerable trouble. On the death of the head master, Parr's friends, who were even then numerous and influential, were desirous that he should fill the vacant post; but their efforts were not successful, and Parr himself was much disappointed. In something like a pet, he opened on his own account a school, which, after subsisting a few years, was given up for the masterships successively of Colchester and Norwich Grammar Schools. At Norwich he remained till his final remove, to the perpetual curacy of Hatton; a place in which he is best remembered, and which he contrived to identify with his name. He here opened a private school. It was always full, and many men, eminent in after life, were educated at it.

Dr. Parr may well be said to have been born a schoolmaster. He was the Busby of his day; in every word, in every look, the pedagogue; stern and despotic; awful in rule; absolute king over his subjects, from whose decision there was no appeal; whilst execution, not always leniently inflicted, immediately followed sentence. It is not meant

that any great harm was done, or that the punishments, though severe, were unjust. But boys, as they become men, seldom look back with complacency on a birch-wielding schoolmaster. Johnson said, of his old tutor Hunter, that he was "wrongheadedly severe." We are told that Parr was accustomed to introduce a former pupil into company something in this way—"This is Mr.—. I well flogged him when a boy, and if I had not flogged him then, he would not have been the person he is now." The compliment was not always appreciated.

The brief accession to power of "All the Talents," in the first decade of the present century, gave Dr. Parr strong and warrantable hopes of Church preferment. His own desires, sometimes openly expressed, were towards the episcopal dignity, and he pleased himself and his friends with the anticipation of the things he would accomplish when a bishop. These flattering ideas were not realized. Of learning and intellectual power, all must have been convinced he had far more than a common share, and of his integrity there was no question. Very probably it was thought that the *suaviter in modo* was not sufficiently prominent in his character, and there might have been a dread of pedantic displays of superior knowledge. Possibly also his habits were not not courtly enough; as was remarked of Paley, "he was not a presentable man." Certainly George III. would have looked coldly on him, and to George IV., the "first gentleman in Europe," his hard and peremptory style of address would have proved eminently distasteful. Still, whilst the good things of the hierarchy were profusely scattered on very inferior men, a portion of them might have fallen to the lot of singular uprightness, and profound erudition.

The manners of Dr. Parr partook more of the eighteenth than of the nineteenth century. Though seldom intentionally rude, he was often felt to be rough, and sometimes inexcusably so. "Now, you dog, do your best;"—when a boy read to him a speech of Fox. At table he loved to talk, much more than to listen; and if his "table talk" was generally instructive, it was alloyed with a positiveness of assertion that suffered no reply. He was an inveterate smoker; his own dictum, "No pipe, no Parr," has passed into a proverb. This habit, though he used only the finest tobacco, and half filled his pipe with salt, frequently proved offensive to his friends. Charles Lamb, it is true, surpassed him in stubborn devotion to the Nicotian weed. It was in response to Parr's wondering inquiry, how Lamb could possibly have obtained the art of puffing incessantly the rankest tobacco from the blackest of clays, that the immortal answer came:—"I have t-t-toiled after it, Sir, as some men t-t-toil after virtue!"

Mr. Field has given two well engraved portraits of Parr. In one of these, he is in full clerical costume, including the bushy wig, usually associated with our ideas of him; the other is the same individual in loose study gown, with velvet cap on head, and "cleanly long clay pipe" in hand. Generally speaking, he was somewhat negligent of personal appearance in the house and about his grounds, but could put on great external state on set occasions.

It does not appear that Dr. Parr shone as a pulpit orator. He

had a defect in pronunciation, quite a lisp, which fell unpleasantly on the ear. His sermons, also, on great days were far too elaborate. His famous "Spital Sermon," preached in London, 1809, besides being of unparalleled length, was published with a huge body of notes, quite appalling to the sight. The discourse began with a sentence commencing: "Enough, and more than enough—" A witty lady, being asked her opinion of it, severely replied: "Its whole character may be summed in the opening words."

To write a good epitaph requires more than common skill, and Parr was in great request for this species of composition. It mattered not to him whether Latin or English was the medium, he was equally felicitous in both. It is worthy of remark that the epitaph for Johnson in St. Paul's Cathedral, and for Priestley in the New Meeting at Birmingham, proceeded from his pen. The peculiar excellencies of each of these extraordinary men are recorded in the most appropriate terms, though they differed from each other so widely. But the writer considered them united by a common grasp of literature, and also by a common love of truth.

The good doctor's inordinate valuation of his own powers, with corresponding pomposity of diction and manner, furnished much amusement to contemporary critics, who, however, seldom failed to acknowledge his manly virtues. In our own days we have seen him subjected to a harsher judgement, at the hands of De Quincey, Carlyle, and even Macaulay. Their treatment of him we think a little unfair, as well as ungenerous. Parr's was a perfectly transparent character, and visible at a glance. He had many foibles, and even faults, but all were patent, above board, open to the sight, and on the surface. And with every deduction on the score of temper and irritability, arising from unchecked vanity, enough remains of excellence to enable us to regard him with respect and esteem. After all, to use the language of a writer as remarkable for his genuine good humour as for his subtle imagination—"The man was mortal, and he was a schoolmaster."

Congregational Memoirs—Templepatrick.

XL.

HAVING in our last few numbers given a tolerably complete account of the affairs of the Templepatrick Congregation between the years 1646 and 1660, so far as these can be ascertained from the Old Session-Book of that period; we may now mention some facts bearing on the history of that congregation and its minister at that time, which are derived from other sources of information.

Although the Irish Presbyterian Church Courts highly disapproved of the assistance which in 1648 was sent from the Scottish forces in Ulster to Charles I.; and even in the case of the Templepatrick Session (as we have seen) punished, on their return home, such of their adherents as had "gone to England" on this errand; yet they

did not at all approve of the execution of that monarch, which took place on the 30th January in the following year. On the contrary, so soon as they heard of that event they held a meeting in Belfast (on February 15, 1649), from which they issued a "Representation" containing the strongest expression of their condemnation, and abhorrence of that deed. A copy of this "Representation" they determined to send by one of their body to Colonel Monck, the Parliamentary General, who was then at Dundalk; and Mr. Kennedy of Templepatrick was the person who was selected by his brethren for this mission. Along with the "Representation," the Presbytery sent by Mr. Kennedy a verbal message to Colonel Monck, in which they declared to that officer their intention to renew the covenant, and solicited his assistance and co-operation in that work. In reply, Colonel Monck wrote back a letter by Mr. Kennedy, wherein he declared himself "not satisfied with the resolution of the Presbytery [to renew the covenant], and desired they would delay that thing till he returned to Lisnagarvey." This, however, the brethren did not do. On the contrary, they "ordered all their number to perform this duty [of renewing the covenant] in their own congregations first, and thereafter each minister in the [vacant?] congregation next adjoining to his own. All this accordingly was performed in February, 1649." We may, therefore, presume that at this time the Solemn League and Covenant was again administered in Templepatrick.

At this trying juncture, the ministers in their congregations continued to pray for the new king Charles II., which "did endanger their lives in those places where any of the army heard them preach;" and this, doubtless, was the case with Mr. Kennedy of Templepatrick, within whose bounds troops were always located.

But that minister, before the close of 1649, encountered another danger from a different, and indeed, directly opposite quarter. His loyalty in continuing to pray for the king in the hearing of parliamentary soldiers met with a poor return from that king's adherents in Ireland. Colonel George Monroe, a Royalist General, was, about this time, sent into Ulster by Ormond, the Lord Deputy, with a letter to the Commander of the Royalist forces in this province, desiring him "to lay hold on the persons of the ministers as the greatest enemies to their designs. This letter being intercepted, and presented to a meeting of the ministers, they found it their duty to be on their guard." By their advice an attempt was made by some gentlemen in County Antrim, to hinder Monroe, who was at Coleraine, from crossing the Bann into their county. In this attempt people from Templepatrick appear to have taken part, for amongst the forces who mustered at this time to oppose Monroe, mention is made of "some soldiers under the command of Major Clotworthy and Major Ellis," the latter of whom was an elder in Templepatrick Congregation. But nothing came of the contemplated opposition. Monroe, notwithstanding the hostile preparations made to meet him, crossed the Bann, and continuing his advance through the County Antrim, the officers and country gentlemen of the county, after a short parley

with him, gave up all idea of further impeding his progress, and returned home.

The Templepatrick contingent, when they thus came back to their native parish, appear to have taken refuge in the fortified house of Castle Upton, where they awaited the approach of Colonel George Monroe. On that occasion (as indeed perhaps had also been the case in their late abortive expedition) they were accompanied by their minister, Mr. Kennedy, who, in the absence, it is to be presumed, of Mr. Upton, seems to have taken the command of the little garrison. This appears from the following passage in "The History of the Warr of Ireland from 1641 to 1653, by a British Officer in the Regiment of Sir John Clotworthy :"

"After this" (says that writer) "Monroe marched with his party to Toom, which was surrendered before he went thither, where he left some of his men to keep it. Then he marched the next day to Templepatrick, which submitted on these conditions, viz. : A certain minister then in the Castle" [doubtless the minister of the place, Mr. Kennedy] "gave under his hand that none of Cromwell's army should be there received to quarter, which if fulfilled was well known within half a year. Here Monroe escaped narrowly, for a bullet shot out of the Castle, and but one shot in all, saluted and turned his blue cap to the wrong side."

In return for this not very friendly salutation of his blue cap, Monroe would doubtless have burned the town of Templepatrick (as he had lately, under similar provocation, burned the town of Antrim) if there had been a town of Templepatrick to burn. But that operation had (as we have seen), been already performed early in the rebellion, and therefore there was at this time no collection of houses at Templepatrick, outside of Castle Upton, for the incensed Royalist general to commit to the flames. This was in October, 1649. An entry in the old Session-Book, dated February 26, 1650, speaks of "the time" (evidently then recent) "when George Monroe lay about Templepatrick." This doubtless was the occasion alluded to in the foregoing extract.

When Mr. Kennedy was besieged by George Monroe in Castle Upton, he had (as we have seen) "given it under his hand that none of Cromwell's army should be allowed to quarter there." The commander of Cromwell's army was inclined to be more hospitable to Mr. Kennedy than Mr. Kennedy was disposed to be to the troops under his command. He proposed to give Mr. Kennedy and his brethren "quarters" in the fortified town of Carrickfergus. "When Colonel Venables was informed of the ministers in Ulster opposing the present Government in England," he invited them in the first place to meet him in a conference at Dromore in County Down. "After consultation the ministers found it not safe to go to Colonel Venables upon the summons without a safe conduct," for which accordingly they applied. But "the next week after that, instead of a safe conduct, parties were by command of Venables sent in one night about the same time to the several ministers' houses in the country to apprehend them, and bring them to Carrickfergus. This was on June 11, 1650." In pursuance of this order, divers ministers were at this time apprehended and brought to Carrickfergus; but

with respect to Mr. Kennedy of Templepatrick we are told that he, and Mr. Ferguson of Antrim, and Mr. Buttle of Ballymena, "although taken were yet permitted to stay in their own houses till Colonel Venables came from the army, at which time they were also to be brought before him." The reason of this special favour being granted to these three ministers was, that Mr. Kennedy of Templepatrick, and his neighbour Mr. Ferguson of Antrim, when they heard of the order for the arrest of the ministers, had written a joint letter to Colonel Venables "desiring their non-imprisonment till he himself came along to Carrickfergus, at which time they promised to come to him." To this letter Colonel Venables replied in a letter to Messrs. Kennedy and Ferguson dated June 16, 1650, in which he seems to have complied with the request made of him by those two ministers, and it was doubtless in consequence of this compliance that these ministers were spared the indignity to which, on this occasion, many of their brethren were subjected.

So soon, however, as Venables returned to Carrickfergus, Messrs. Kennedy, Ferguson, and Buttle, according to their promise, waited upon him there, along with the rest of the ministers, when they were all asked "whether they would forbear preaching, or praying, or conference in public or private against the present power and State of England." This promise they all refused to give, and the result was that "they were told that since they would not carry themselves submissively to the present Government, they must begone, and that they could expect no favour." With this "notice to quit" they were sent back to their several charges, to make the necessary preparations for their removal.

In the case of Mr. Kennedy, and a few other ministers, this "notice to quit," for some reason not given, does not seem to have been strictly enforced. In the summer of 1651 we find six of the brethren (of whom Mr. Kennedy was one), "remaining in the country and not apprehended;" but their condition was miserable in the extreme. Adair says that "they were now put to greater difficulties than before, being more earnestly searched after than [when they were] in their houses"—from which, we think, it may be inferred that they had been driven out of their own dwellings, and obliged to take shelter in remote or private places, where, however, their people seem to have faithfully waited on their furtive ministrations. — "This continued," we are told, "for another year, during 1652, at which time the people were discouraged through want of the public ordinances." It is to this latter fact, in the case of Templepatrick, that allusion is made in the following marginal note in the Old Session-Book of that congregation to account for the occurrence of two blank pages in the record. "This blank was the time of our minister's trouble, he being pursued by orders from Cromwell's army which continued [so] that he was debarred of public preaching from the 1st of August, 1650, until May, 1652." During all this period Mr. Kennedy was probably lurking among the hills above Templepatrick.

About this time—viz., in 1651, an oath called “the Engagement” was promulgated in Ulster under the authority of the parliamentary army. By this oath all persons were required to swear “that they would be faithful to the Constitution of England as now established without a King or House of Lords.” On June 10, 1651, this oath was “offered” at Antrim to the parishes there about, and to Templepatrick and Ballyclare. It is not stated that the oath was *taken* at these places by all the persons to whom it was “offered.” It is probable that it was taken almost exclusively by the officers and soldiers of the parliamentary army, and by the chief magistrates within the quarters of Colonel Venables, who was then residing at Carrickfergus. It is certain that the Presbyterian ministers of Ulster, whom Venables especially invited to enter into this obligation, refused to do so, and it is likely that their example was followed by many, if not most, of their people.

On the day following, that on which the Republican engagement had been offered to the people of Templepatrick—viz., on June 11, 1651, the congregation of that place lost one of its oldest and most distinguished elders. On that day died Major Edmond Ellis, whose name stands first on the Roll of Elders, appointed immediately after the ordination of Mr. Kennedy. An account of the death and dying words of this exemplary Christian has been fortunately preserved. It is entitled “the words of that worthie and faithful Professor of the Gospel, Major Edmond Ellis, at his death bed a little before his last breathing in the hearing of Christians who came to visit him.” This account was probably written by Major Ellis’s minister, Mr. Kennedy; for it is remarkable that whilst various other persons, including Mr. Kennedy’s own wife, are mentioned as having been addressed by the dying man, the name of Mr. Kennedy himself, who of all men living would be the most likely to be present and speak on such an occasion, is not given. A person, however, who is simply designated as “a friend” is spoken of as having been addressed by Major Ellis, and as the words addressed to this “friend” were singularly appropriate to the condition of Mr. Kennedy at that time, it is likely that he was the person alluded to under this designation, and also that he was the writer of the narrative, in which, from a feeling of modesty, he did not like to mention himself by name.

The narrative itself is too long to be inserted here entire, but its simple pathos is very touching, and the following sentences from this beautiful description of the death bed of a Templepatrick Elder two hundred and thirty years ago, may not be displeasing to the reader.

“He took his leave solemnly of his whole family and others about him, speaking severally apart to them all. He began with his wife and desyring her to speak of the sweet and comfortable fellowship that was betwixt them since their marriage. ‘We have been’ (says he) ‘now these seven years married, and there was never a contradictory word betwixt us;’ and having exhorted her refreshingly, gravelie, and piouslie, he prayed God to strengthen her under the present burden. And speaking to them about him he said: ‘Help this poor woman to bear the cross; there is nothing that pains me in my departure but the condition of my poor wife.’ Among other particulars he desyred her to do him the last duty with

her own hands, to wit, to wind him herself. Upon which words, as was no marvell, she fell a weeping more heavilie, we cannot say bitterlie, but as one wounded deeplie in affection. Whereupon he replied to her : ' I have been these seven years with you, but ye never angered me till now.'

" To his son he said : ' Arthur, you are but young. Seek unto God. I have been many times desyring you and praying for you. I had once the possession of all you are to enter to, and I was steward to it a little while ; and you know not how long you may enjoy it. Therefore make sure your salvation.'

" Then he called for his daughter Susanna, being about two years old, and put his hand on her head, and prayed that the Lord would bless her and train her up in His wayes, and make her His servant, and make good unto her that promise, I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed. Also he said : ' I often prayed for her, both before she was born and since.'

" To a friend [Mr. Kennedy, his minister?] he said : ' Ye have begun to be faithfull—study every day to be more faithfull, and shrink not from one hair-breadth of the truth for all the hazard and difficulties ye may meet with. Study to strengthen others.'

" To Mrs. Kennedy he said : " Study to mortification and be helpful to your husband in his duty, that ye may be comfortable to him in his present condition.'

" To Mr. Shaw [his brother Elder in Templepatrick] he said : ' Mr. Shaw, I am glad to have seen you. I will take my leave of you. Outward profession will not doe the turn. Life and death are no jesting matter.' "

Of such a man we are not surprised to read, a little further on :
 " He went away very sweetly. He was in an agonie for a little tyme, but he calmed mildlie, longing much for his dissolution, and compleat union with the Lord. . . . Beautifull was he to the profession in his life tyme, and beautifull in his death, and strengthening to them that were about him."

" What shall I Answer ? "

WERE we asked only the questions of the Catechism, we might be able always to have answers ready at hand. But even then some failure in precise reply would not be escaped. For in these days that good old method of instruction by question and answer has somewhat gone out of vogue. And amidst the circles of enlightened Christians, as they like to consider themselves, catechetical queries and catechetical replies are not held in high favour. Tendencies, affinities, inquiring spirits, and demands of the age, are convenient things, because vague. But formulated speech and definite affirmation betoken a ruder vigour than is customary or approved.

It takes some wisdom to put a proper interrogation, more, to fit that interrogation with appropriate answer. And they who have from time to time framed unmeaning petitions for information ; and they who have again and again been at a loss how to return a judicious hint, include very large classes of folk, deeply read as well as foolish ones ; or, " some gentle, all simple," as the witty Dean said of his congregation. The investigator of ecclesiastical curiosities would know what an Archdeacon might be. And he is informed that " one

who exercises Archidiaconal functions" is so called. The wayfarer would like to hear how many miles he may be from such a destination, or whither such a road leads. And, if in Ireland, he finds that civilities in return press to the front; the reply is a question, "Where do you come from?" In the American States they are not content to make question thus keep pace with question. There the stranger is the proper and appointed target whereinto are shot a quiverful of inquiries. Whereas in China if the visitor would be held polite he need not wait, but at once should open the confabulation with—"Have you eaten your rice?"—the customary formula to inaugurate amicable interchange of sentiments.

"What shall I answer!" echoes the reflective mind, falling into a brown study. It depends on the question put? Scarcely so, in ordinary life and between neighbours: by no means so, in chance company, and where personal reputations, religious controversies, and political strifes are concerned. Teacher and scholar, it is true, must go by the book. Between them, question and answer should reciprocally match. Student and examiner cannot afford to deviate from the straight-hitting of yea, yea, nay, nay. But how small a portion of the world is on that narrow categorical footing of the school and the college. Cross-questioner and witness, too, must for the most part confine themselves to facts. In this relationship, however, an indirect answer may be at times as unlooked for as it is conclusive. The analyst in a case of poisoning is challenged by the prisoner's counsel to declare that his skill is not sufficient to determine in what form the drug has been administered. He replies: "I might find sugar in your stomach, yet could not tell whether it was lump sugar or soft you had taken."

Ordinarily it is not the question, but the quarter whence it comes, or the object wherewith it is asked, that avails to shape the answer. Bishop Berkeley, when waiting in Rhode Island to have the promised grant sent after him, by means of which he is to accomplish his great plan of founding an American University, and experiencing the truth, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," at length procures an influential friend to ascertain directly from Sir Robert Walpole, if the Government means to pay the £20,000. That astute and practical official deigns the following rejoinder: "If the question be put to me in my ministerial capacity I must at once beg to say the money will most certainly be paid, as soon as the urgency of affairs may permit. But if I am asked, as a friend, if it be well for Berkeley to wait till the promise be fulfilled, I should not advise him to delay returning to this country." Again, the time and circumstances may make inquiries altogether beside the mark. "Can you tell me who died for you?" asks the zealous Scripture reader, as he hastens to infuse his religious consolation in the ear of the unfortunate. "I guess, stranger," rejoins the hapless victim "bleeding fast from life away" on one of the battle plains in the American Civil War; "this ain't a time for asking conundrums." Further, there are questions, and these very numerous ones, put every day by hosts of people, which are

justly left to answer themselves. They are as idle as possible. They put together things which have no connection. The irritable man asks the noisy schoolboy, "What are you hollering for, when I am going by?" Whereon the school boy, not behind hand, would know, "What are you going by for, when I am hollerin'?" Such questions assume that the person who is expected to answer is as great a fool as his questioner. And they the more abound the less the possibility of any one being informed on the topic.

What shall I answer? queries the intelligent sharer of human nature. A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth; and a word spoken in due season how good is it! Of what sort is the word to be spoken? If the questioner be foolish, he is not to make me foolish; if he be wise, I must appreciate his wisdom, and show that I do. "Do you know," says the guest to whom his hostess has been giving a hint of her antipathy to smoking, "that some have entertained angels unawares?" "Possibly," replied the wise dame, "but I know angels do not go about smoking tobacco." "You must cut your coat according to your cloth," says the manufacturer to the young employé, advocating an increase of pay, because he contemplates marriage. "How can I, if there be not enough cloth?" suggests hopeful. "Then, my lad," rejoins the older head, "make a jacket of it, make a jacket of it."

On the other hand, even if the inquirer be really wise, the resource of enlisting his own services in procuring the answer may not always serve. For questions are sometimes asked, the answers to which are as yet undetermined. A minister, on his round of visits, comes to a house, inside of which he hears quarrelling between man and wife. "I should like to know who is the head of this house," he demands, on the door being opened. "Well, if you will take a seat," exclaims the irate paterfamilias, "we may soon tell you, for we are just trying to settle that point." "And why," said the episcopal visitor, quoting from the Catechism to a class of youths amidst whom was the child of Baptist parents, "Why should young children be baptized, seeing that by reason of their innocent age and ignorance, etc." "Ay, why indeed?" questioned back again that youthful Baptist. There may be many proper and pertinent answers, which strike us afterwards; but at the time how much at sea are we, as we wonder to ourselves—*What* shall I answer?

In another case, when a reply has to be given, there is only one accredited, invariable response, like the "Not guilty" of the prisoner at the bar. Yet when brought to the point, a fair listener thinks *What shall I answer?* Everybody well knows what short word of letters two is destined to be the lady's resource. Far be it from us to think to volunteer any quite needless assistance in such distress. But we may attempt some solution of other difficulties, for the benefit of those who are fancy-free.

What shall I answer? A moralist would believe the whole weight of the matter centred in this personal pronoun. To him things are those which concern him, and those which concern him not. He

looks at the world relatively, and does not abandon himself to assertions above the measure of a man. As for himself, how shall I answer the matter, he asks. 'Tis fit for me to say, or in such case to omit reply. The most general topic may have its particular illustration, the most abstract truth its concrete example. "With what do you mix your paints, Mr. Opie?" queried the make-believe critic, as if the secret of the art lay on the palette. "With brains, Sir," said the upholder of mind's supremacy over matter. "I read Locke," declared the pretentious philosopheress, "but I can't make out what *idea* means. What is it?" "Why, Ma'am, it is the feminine of *idiot*." Questions are very good things in their way; but they are the mere bye-play, for the most part, of human lives. And the chief service they do us is to bring character to light. They enable us to discern between those who question others because they think themselves wise, and those who question themselves, for they feel how readily the children of men become unwise.

What shall I *answer*? A conscientiously devout adherent of the Christian faith reads the matter less personally than the moralist, yet more wisely. For to him questions are not so much proofs of a mood indwelling in the frivolous, the inquisitive, the casuistical, etc., as occasions of speaking the truth. The whole value of the question is in the answer it should get. As the soldier says that "every bullet has its billet," so a lover of the Gospel believes there is to be an account rendered of every word. A word is one of those criteria whereby we shall be justified or condemned. Words are but breath? Breath, however, is life. And as our life is not devoid of its reason, so are our words not without their inevitable better or worse. And thus, one who is questioned may consider himself invited to follow, or to lead, in the duty of redeeming the time. What shall I *answer*? asks the Christian, if my life does not answer to the behest of Him whose word is "Be ye holy," or to the call of the gracious one who inviteth saying, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden."

Music in the Congregation.

WHAT a magnificent and awe-inspiring spectacle was that of the dedication of the Temple at Jerusalem, when four thousand musicians assembled to lead the great congregation in the service of praise! When endeavouring to recall the scene, one can almost hear reverberating through the twenty-five centuries that have since elapsed, the full, grand, swelling harmony, as it echoed through the courts of the Temple and the great national edifice itself, as the choir in rapt enthusiasm rendered the twenty-fourth psalm. When the ark, the seat of the Most High, was borne by the officiating priests into the sacred precincts of the Temple, great indeed must have been the effect upon the assembled multitudes as two thousand of the choristers burst forth in mighty, triumphant tones, singing—*Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors; and the*

King of Glory shall come in; to which the other two thousand with jubilant voice responded—*Who is the King of Glory?* and were answered by the first division—*The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle!* the whole of the four thousand uniting and proclaiming—*The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of glory!* And when the ark was deposited beneath the cherubim, and the glad, exultant voices rang forth—*For He is good, for His mercy endureth for ever*, the emotion must have been overwhelming. It would indeed seem as though the Divine Presence had taken possession of the place. When it is borne in mind that King Solomon, the national patriarchs, prophets, priests, magistrates, as well as multitudes of the common people from all parts of the country, were present to render praise and homage to the great Jehovah, that greater King of their nation, the effect could scarcely be other than overpowering. What a picture is this for the imagination to dwell upon! A vast congregation comprising the rulers and teachers of the nation, a vast choir and a sensational ritual to which the people were devotedly attached, must indeed have furnished a spectacle worthy any effort and cost to behold.

We have nothing in Christendom in the present day, grand though some of our services are, comparable with the Service of Praise of the Jews of old. They were our spiritual progenitors, but unlike them, we have ceased to be of one body and form; and while almost endless division and sub-division may on the one hand redound to spiritual sturdiness, they have on the other, led to congregational weakness and insignificance.

But even where two or three are gathered together in the name of the Most High, ascription of praise and honour and blessing may go up to the throne of grace as truly as when thousands or tens of thousands are assembled before God. Its acceptableness in the sight of Heaven does not depend upon numbers, but upon the spirit in which it is rendered.

Frequent exhortations to praise God with voice and instrument are met with in the Psalms; and how earnest are they! They are not mere empty, half-hearted injunctions, but the requests of a soul inspired with the love of musical adoration. "Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding." And again "Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints." And throughout the entire history of the Christian Church, music has been blended with devotion and instruction; it has indeed been made the medium of both. The sacred song was the means of praise and devotion to Jesus and his disciples when gathered together for the last time in the "large upper room" at Jerusalem; it furnished similar means to small groups of Primitive Christians scattered over Palestine, Asia Minor and in Rome; and it cheered and supported those same devoted souls when committed to a martyr's doom. In Britain and other countries, the hymn of praise and the psalm of thanksgiving

went hand in hand with the principles of Christianity, and music became the hand-maid of religion. Throughout Roman Catholic times it formed an important part of the sensuous ritual ; in Reformation times it was also instrumental in cheering the few solitary, faithful worshippers, who gathered together in obedience to the demands of reason and the request of conscience ; and it has kept pace with the spread of the Reformed Faith, and has travelled with it into all lands, and among all tongues, tribes, and nations.

Music generally, especially when wedded to words, possesses rousing and inspiring qualities ; but this is especially the case with sacred music, the music of the congregation, the music of praise, adoration, thanksgiving. When sweet, solemn, majestic words are blended with sweet, solemn, majestic music, how elevating, ennobling, inspiring do they become ! The souls of multitudes are lifted from the meaner things of earth to revel in the blessedness of heaven. And what hallowing associations are connected with it !—associations pertaining to the past and the present, to the dead and the living. The psalm or hymn learned in the home, in the Sunday School, or the congregation, in childhood or youth, from lips and hearts once dear, but now wrapped in the silence of the grave, is at once a means of sanctifying, chastening, purifying and blessing. Its lessons may not all have been realised in youth ; they may, probably, have been revealed only after the flight of years, when we have had long conflict with circumstances, after being overtaken by trial or doubt, or sorrow, or sickness. Even in hours of darkness and mystery, the light of some half-forgotten hymn learned in early life, sometimes breaks through the clouds and dispenses comfort, consolation and hope. To have such a one, fraught with so many associations of a tender character, sweetly sung in the congregation in mature life, is to be thrice blessed.

To hear assembled thousands put their hearts into the words and strains of the *Old Hundredth*—what could be more solemnly thrilling, what more soul-elevating ! To listen to Pierpont's grand hymn, commencing—

“ O Thou to whom in ancient time
The lyre of Hebrew bards was strung ; ”

when wedded to some tune, such for instance as *Stirling*, uniting solemnity with stately progression, how awe-inspiring ! The all-embracing providence of the Deity is vividly realised, and it is felt that the aspiring soul is wafted on the wings of sacred song into the Divine presence. Blended with an organ or other instrument combining sweetness and power, the voices of a multitude under such circumstances are indeed influential for good.

“ All people that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.” Though not in these exact words, this is an injunction of Scripture ; in which few believe ; or at all events in accordance with which only few act. Do *all* that dwell not upon earth, but in Christendom ; nay not in Christendom, but in any one country ; or even all who are united as a congregation “ sing to the Lord with

cheerful voice?" Generally it is only a very few who sing, and that not always with a voice that is cheerful. Too often it is with a careless, drawling, untuneful voice. The psalmody of most congregations, while doubtless helpful to some extent, is not half as helpful as it might be. What is the character of the music heard in very many of our meeting-houses? Too frequently it is very unsatisfactory. Too frequently it is lame, halting, drowsy, wanting both body and soul. On the entry of the minister, a loud, grating harmonium with squeaking pedals, or barrel organ, neither of which would be tolerated for an hour in our homes, violently bursts forth, and discourses in a jerky, wheezy, asthmatic sort of manner, a voluntary that is far from "soft," consisting of some well-known hymn tune played through once, the ending being as abrupt as the beginning. Then the hymn is given out, and struggled through by a few earnest, hearty souls who are fully conscious of having to bear the entire musical burden, while the general body of worshippers stand, or loll upon the pew backs, and gaze, not "through golden vistas into heaven," but into vacuity. This operation is engaged in several times. When the collection is made, the wailing and lamentation of the asthmatic harmonium or barrel organ are again heard, apparently with a view to drowning the jingling of coppers as they are dropped into the collecting boxes. And when the congregation disperses, there is sometimes silence, and sometimes a veritable musical tornado.

Surely more taste might be displayed in this portion of our service, and with a little patient, persevering and continuous effort, a great improvement be effected. If people only sang and played with the "understanding" and the soul, a great and beneficial change would at once be brought about. But too frequently, as has been said, to a few willing hearts and voices, the burden is left, while many might render assistance if they would. Oh that we had a baptism of music as well as of spirit in our congregations, and that our service of sacred song was as inspiring, as elevating, as grand, as spiritualizing as it might be! If we had but hearts imbued with the love of harmony, and lips attuned to sing, how different, how much more like the ideal psalmody that has been hinted at would it become? But "the country" seems to be easily satisfied in this respect, seems to look upon improvement as a thing impossible, and therefore is contented to "rest and be thankful." There will I fear be no reformation or improvement, until the element of dissatisfaction manifests itself. When we can realise the fact that, in a musical sense, we are sinners, we may hope for improvement. We may not be greater sinners than others of the churches around us, but there is little consolation in this. We want singing with the heart, and singing with the "understanding." Of both we have far too little. If those who are already able to sing with the "understanding" would see to it, that those who could, should sing with propriety and spirit, we should soon have a musical reformation. As has been said, a little patient, persistent effort would bring it about.

But sometimes our leaders of psalmody are themselves far from

being able to lead with propriety and effectiveness the people—or at all events that portion of them who are willing to be led—in the service of song. Too frequently, tunes are chosen which do not at all suit the words. Hymns, being of very different type and character, require different classes of tunes to suit them. A rousing hymn should be wedded to a rousing tune; a meditative hymn to a meditative tune; a plaintive hymn to a plaintive tune. But do our choir-leaders always think of this? It is to be feared they do not, and that the only thing considered is that of securing “measure for measure.” And too frequently there is little room for discrimination of this kind. Perhaps the entire stock of tunes to draw from does not comprise more than six or seven of the commoner measures. Sometimes the selection is not even as extensive as this, and the same tune has to be used twice in the course of a single service. Under such circumstances, the selection of appropriate tunes for given words, is simply impossible. When a minister visits a “country” congregation for the purpose of conducting service, and offers his list of hymns, if there should be a peculiar metre among them, the choir-leader generally pleads for substitution of another in its place; and if the “peculiar” hymn has been selected because of its special suitability to the subject of the discourse, its sacrifice is a sacrifice of the unity of the service also.

An English minister went to preach in one of our country pulpits. It was his first visit to the place. On being introduced before the service to the precentor (there was no harmonium or other instrument), he expressed a wish to be supplied with a hymn-book for the selection of his hymns, when the *Psalms and Paraphrases*, consisting principally of common measures, were put into his hand. The minister inquired what kind of metres would be most acceptable, and was informed that he was at liberty to choose any metres, as he (the precentor) and the choir were acquainted with all classes of tunes. “Then,” said the minister, “if I should choose a peculiar metre, it will be all right?”—to which the all-knowing precentor, widely opening his eyes, and briskly scratching his head, replied: “Oh dear no; I cannot sing *peculiar* metres, for I’ve never studied *peculiar* music!”

Christmas Sonnet.

Born is the light of Light, the love of Love,
The songs of angels hail the Child of God,
Soft radiance streams on mortals from above,
And gentle peace is whispered all abroad.

Saviour! How fair the promise of thy birth!
The mingled chant of glory and good-will
Swells through the opening heavens, the longing earth—
But, ah! it dies away, and all is still.

O wake again the music of that hour!
Our hearts its gladness need, our lives its power.

B.

Notes of Sunday School Lessons.

XLVI.—(*December 4th*).

THE GOLDEN CALF.

Read Exodus xxxi. 18 and xxxii. 1-24, and 30, 34.

THE "Ten Words" show the unity of morality and religion. These two things cannot be separated.

By the aid of later teaching we put a higher meaning on xxxi. 18. The laws of right and wrong are "written with the finger of God" in our hearts. Compare 2 Cor. iii. 3.

That the Israelites were not yet able to keep these commandments was soon manifest. Moses was absent from the camp for several days. The people felt that the restraint which he put upon them was removed. Left to themselves they revived the practices which their leader had condemned. They desired some object of worship more material than the unseen Jehovah. They were as yet much too rude and gross for a pure, spiritual worship. And yet they must worship something. In the desert, as elsewhere, they had wants to be supplied, and dangers to be preserved from. These things suggested the old inveterate habit of staving-off evils by worship offered to idols. And so they called upon Aaron to make them a graven image.

Aaron's compliance shows his inferiority to Moses. The art of working in metals was learned from the Egyptians. The idol also was one of the Egyptian representations of Osiris, of either the ox Mnevis or the bull Apis. The Israelites had worshiped the gods of Egypt, Joshua xxiv. 14.

The disappointment of Moses. At the first opportunity, when his control was relaxed for a little, his people relapsed into the idolatry from which he had striven to deliver them. For a time he gave way to his feelings. In his anger he flung down the tables. What had a people so low to do with a high morality and religion?

His passion yields to noble sentiments. Hope gave him courage for action. The idol is destroyed.

Then he turns to Jehovah, "the jealous God," whose anger, according to his conception, must have been aroused. He even entreats Him to accept the offering of his life as an atonement for his people's sin. Never was Moses so great as at that moment. He was equal to Paul when he wished to be accursed from Christ for his countrymen, Romans ix. 3.

Lessons :

- (1). Religion and morality inseparable.
- (2). The difficulty of out-growing old superstitions.
- (3). The nobility of self-sacrifice.

XLVII.—(*December 11th*).

LIFE IN THE DESERT.

Read Numbers xiii., and xiv.

The Isrelites purified from their idolatry, and instructed in the laws of the new religion, as Moses hoped, were now ready to go forward. But Moses was to learn, by repeated experiences, that the sanguine expectations of reformers fail of realisation. The people had been moved. They were, without doubt, quite earnest in their reception of the new teaching. To a large extent, however, this was only a response to the enthusiasm of their leader. Reaction and failure followed, and then again shame and suffering wrought penitence.

They came to Kadesh, near the confines of Canaan. Tradition fixes it near to Petra—a strange city of Mount Seir, whose houses were hollowed from the sides of the mountains, and whose walls were carved in the face of the rock. See description in Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 87-92.

From this place an entrance was to have been made into the Promised Land. But the tribes learnt that the country, though fine and productive, was possessed by a strong people who dwelt in walled cities. Their courage failed them. There were murmurings and complaints against their leaders, and even talk of returning to Egypt. The people, it was evident, were not ready for the perilous work of invasion. Slavery had left its taint in their hearts. They must still remain in the desert and be more disciplined. Another generation, born in freedom, would be nobler and more capable of great deeds. As yet individuals were morally weak, and the tribes had not learnt to act together as a nation. A rash attempt at invasion was repulsed, and then the Israelites went southwards once more.

The accounts tell us that for *forty* years they wandered in the desert. This round number not exact. Probably the time was more than forty years, inasmuch as Rameses III. of Egypt made war upon the inhabitants of Canaan, and no mention is made of the Israelites in the monumental records at Medinet Abou of the expedition, which took place between 1280 B.C. and 1260 B.C. We may infer that fifty years after their departure from Egypt (about 1320 B.C.), the Israelites had not settled in Canaan.

The greatest lessons are often the most difficult to learn. Moses wished his people to learn that Jehovah must be served above all things by a moral life. As some of the people supported him, he seems at times to have used these as instruments of force to compel others to do right.

Lessons :

- (1). It is not easy to outgrow the ill effects of a degraded life.
- (2). It takes much time and effort to reach a high morality.
- (3). The history is meant to teach that he who trusts in Jehovah is helped by him.

XLVIII.—(*December 18th.*)

THE DEATH OF MOSES.

Read Deuteronomy xxxiv.

We cannot follow all the incidents contained in the books of the Pentateuch. The children of Israel had made great progress. They had tried their strength in war and proved victorious. Now the work of Moses was approaching accomplishment.

We are unable to point out the exact site of Pisgah. But the whole range, afterwards called Abarim, is "one vast Pisgah." See *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 300.

The children of Israel are encamped in the desert plain of Moab. The aged Moses has recently led them to victory, takes his farewell of them, and ascends the mountain. From its summit the land of Canaan, the goal of his hopes through life, lay before him. The people for whom he had toiled and endured, were ready to enter in. But for himself the end had come.

Why was not Moses to enter Canaan? Two reasons are given in the Pentateuch. Moses prayed to enter the good land, but Jehovah was angry with him for the sake of the people (Deut. iii. 26). Jehovah was angry with Moses because the Israelites had sinned.

Some writer, however, who believed that Jehovah was too just to punish one for the sin of others, gave a different reason—a sin committed by Moses. In Numbers xx. we read that Moses did not exactly follow the command of Jehovah, when the people were without water, but that in anger he said, "Can we fetch you water out of this rock?" and that he struck the rock. Jehovah then said that because they failed to honour Him, Moses and Aaron should not enter Canaan.

These are attempts to explain the act of Providence. God's ways are not as our ways. Our own ideas of justice would ask that those who toil and suffer for a certain end should live to reap the reward of their struggles. But it is often otherwise. Admiral Nelson and General Wolf died before they could receive the honours of a grateful nation. Jesus Christ died seeing his enemies triumphant. We feel sad at such incidents. But Paul gives us the true spirit in which our work should be done, 1 Cor. iii. 7-9.

Lessons :

(1). It is our part to do what we can, not to calculate what shall be our reward.

(2). Where the work is mighty the initiator can only advance it a few steps. To have begun it is a matter for satisfaction. Others will carry it on.

(3). All faithful work for God aims only at advancing the kingdom of God.

XLIX.—(*December 25th*).

CHRISTMAS DAY.

Read Luke ii. 1-20.

The birth of Christ has always been an event of deep interest to his disciples, and Bethlehem has through successive ages been visited by pilgrims from many lands. See its position on the map of Palestine, six or seven miles south of Jerusalem. It was full of interest to Israelites long before the time of Christ. Rachel, the wife of Jacob, died and was buried there. It was the abode of Jesse, the father of David, and there the Psalmist spent his early life.

Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth in Galilee, with Mary his wife, came to Bethlehem, the district to which his family belonged, in order to be enrolled, in consequence of a decree issued by the Roman Emperor that a census should be taken of the whole district. "World" in this passage, as in others [St. Luke iv. 5 ; Acts xi. 28], may be understood to signify only a particular part of the world. When they reached Bethlehem, they sought the caravansary, or khan, a large empty house, without food, or beds; travellers commonly brought with them a mat or coverlet. The caravansary was crowded, and Joseph and Mary had even less than the scanty accommodation afforded to those who had arrived earlier.

Here Jesus was born; and several touching and expressive incidents are mentioned in connection with his birth. We are told that shepherds, keeping watch over their flocks through the night, were attracted by an unusual brightness in the heavens, which in Scripture language is spoken of as "the glory of the Lord;" and while they were filled with wonder and awe, a voice fell upon their ears, saying, "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." Shew how the advent of Christ is gladdening news, designed to bless all people.

We read that presently after, a heavenly host, praising God, poured forth the anthem, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased." Such is the Revised Version of the passage, more familiar to us as it appears in the authorised translation, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Shew that the Gospel of Christ tends to promote the glory of God, and to spread peace on the earth.

Although the season of the year in which the birth of Christ occurred cannot be exactly determined, and although most probably it was not in the depth of winter, the day commonly received answers every purpose for commemorating the event. Some think that no obligation rests upon them to commemorate it in any way, and certainly such are no less Christians than those who keep it. Yet the season is rich in sacred suggestions; and thus may to many be helpful. The day may most properly be marked by a special religious service. It may also be happily employed in drawing closer the ties of home and friendship, and lightening the burden of poverty or affliction.

Ecclesiastical Summary.

AT length the inexorable hand of death has stricken down the towering form of John MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam, the "Lion of the Fold of Judah," as O'Connell first called him. He died 8 Nov., aet. 90. No one had been a more implacable opponent of the Government system of National Education than this powerful prelate; and on the introduction of Mr. Forster's School Board scheme for the sister island, he went over to England, to stir up the Catholics to resist the passing of the measure. Of gigantic presence, and with an overwhelming command of powerful and exuberant oratory, he exhibited all the fiery and all the genial characteristics of the genuine Celtic nature, and seemed a living representative of the mighty men of a more ancient time. He was, moreover, a true scholar, and an enthusiast for the preservation of the Irish language, himself translating into that venerable tongue portions of Homer, and the whole of Moore's Irish Melodies in the metres of the originals. —Death has also claimed the oldest member of the Sacred College, Cardinal Prospero Caterini, who had completed his 86th year. He was perhaps the greatest authority of his time in the department of canonical law.—Current apprehensions as to the near approach of Ritualism to Rome will not be diminished by the secession of Rev. Sidney H. Little. But a short time ago Rev. J. Knox Little was made a Canon of Worcester, amid the protests of the Evangelicals; and now the Canon's brother has joined the Catholic Church with his wife and family.—It is by such gains from the outside that the Roman Church keeps up its position in England, for its own people are admittedly falling away. In a sermon at Poplar, the other day, Cardinal Manning contrasted the faith of the fathers and mothers of the Catholic Church with the defections of their children. Men and women coming over from Ireland to England persevere, as a rule, in the practice of their faith, through many fall away. But this was not true, he was afraid, of the children born of them. "After they left school they forgot their duty; they came rarely if ever, or never to confession, and, therefore, rarely if ever, or never to Communion."—The proposed appointment of Mr. Errington,

as accredited representative of the United Kingdom at the Vatican, finds no favour with Cardinal Manning and his friends. They have usually hitherto been the means of communication, and they fear to lose their influence under the new arrangement.—It is impossible at present to estimate the full force of the blow to clerical interests in France which is delivered by the elevation of M. Paul Bert, an eager enemy of all religion, to the combined Ministries of Worship and Instruction. That it is intended as a menace to the priesthood there can be no doubt.

Dr. Barclay, the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem, is dead. In terms of the arrangement entered into when the See was founded in 1840, the next appointment rests with the German Emperor, subject however to a veto on the part of the Archbishop of Canterbury.—In Dr. Thomas Tresham Gregg, of Dublin, a unique figure has disappeared from the busy scene of life. He was a clever and able controversialist, long a fierce opponent of Popery, and later of Disestablishment. Dr. Gregg has been called a modern Asgillite, for he fully expected exemption from the decree of death. John Asgill, however, held that every one who really held the true Christian faith could never die; Dr. Gregg, we believe, was confident that the second coming of Christ would take place in his own time, and hence anticipated an escape from the great ordeal.—Professor Plumptre, formerly on the Old Testament Revision Committee, has been made Dean of Wells.—Another Deanery, that of Carlisle, has been filled up by the appointment of Rev. John Oakley, once a very High churchman, but now a representative man of a somewhat intermediate school, the High-Broad, which combines strong churchiness, and a pronounced flavour of sacerdotal doctrine, with a very free position in regard to the topics of Biblical criticism.—If we are to believe the newspapers, the scheme for the endowment of a new Bishopric at Newcastle-on-Tyne has received substantial aid from a member of the Society of Friends, Mr. J. W. Pease, a Newcastle banker, who is said to have presented to the Bishopric Fund the mansion of Benwell Towers, worth £12,000, as an Episcopal residence for

the expected new diocese.—The Vicar of Epsom, advertising for a curate, takes occasion to announce that no “blasphemous hymns,” and no “Ritualistic follies,” are allowed in his church.—A census of attendance at public worship on Sundays has been taken by volunteers in a good number of English towns. The returns are, on the whole, rather more favourable to Nonconformists than to the Church; but the feature which is most striking about them is the vast population apparently unaccounted for by any of the churches. The realisation of this fact may lead to good results. At Accrington, Rev. C. Williams (Baptist) has arranged for a conference of all the local clergy and ministers, including Roman Catholic priests, to consider the question of dealing with the masses of the district, in view of the serious deficiencies brought to light by the religious census taken in that town.—The American Church Congress, a very conservative body, has taken alarm at the Revised Version. Dr. Phillips Brooks, the friend of Dean Stanley, spoke warmly in its favour. We are glad to observe that this Congress has a practical side, and devoted a session to the discussion of a crying need in American public affairs, viz., Civil Service Reform.

In connection with the Presbyterian Church, we have to note the granting of a charter to the General Assembly's College, Belfast, and the Magee College, Londonderry, united under the designation of the Presbyterian Theological University, and empowered to confer theological degrees on students of the above colleges, who have passed a regular curriculum in arts and theology, and *honoris causa*, on ministers of the Irish Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian Church may well feel grateful for this boon; at the same time it must not be forgotten that the step is probably only a prelude to the bestowal of a similar favour on the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland.—Leading congregations of the Free Kirk vie with each other in asserting their freedom by electing Robertson Smith to the Eldership. At the Free High Kirk, Edinburgh, with which he has been connected since his removal from the Chair at Aberdeen, his name headed the list of those for whom votes had been recorded.—A proof that

heresy has not been extinguished in Aberdeen by the silencing of Robertson Smith is furnished by the election of ex-Professor Bain as Lord Rector of the University. This shows, pretty conclusively, that the studious youth of the North of Scotland are not exactly standing on the old paths.—Meanwhile, a new heresy case is brewing in the Free Kirk, the book incriminated this time being Professor Bruce's (of Glasgow) *Chief End of Revelation*. There seems to be no reluctance on the part of the Traditionalists to blow the fire of a fresh prosecution, but there is some hesitation as to who are to be first to burn their fingers with it. A meeting of seventy ministers and elders, held in Edinburgh, were in favour of leaving the Presbytery of Glasgow to take the initiative, failing action on the part of the College Committee.—Rev. Dr. John Hall, formerly of Dublin, has been offered the Chancellorship of the University of New York.—Irish Presbyterianism has furnished an antagonist to Robertson Smith, in the person of Professor Robert Watts, of Belfast, who has published a volume on *The Newer Criticism and the Analogy of the Faith*. In proving that the ex-professor of Aberdeen is out of harmony with several statements in the *Westminster Confession*, Professor Watts is, we think, successful enough. But this is mainly a domestic quarrel; and perhaps Robertson Smith agrees with Professor Witherow of Magee College, “that the doctrines contained in the Bible may be imperfectly stated in the human representation of them.” As regards the portion of his book which is of interest for general scholars, not committed *à priori* to Westminster views of revelation, Professor Watts has yet to show a competency for a thorough discussion of the subject. A Hebraist who speaks of the “cuneiform inscription on the Moabite stone” (p. 3), a critic who confounds the completion of the “Canon” with the settlement of the “text” (p. 6), a student of the literature of the subject who imagines Kuenen to be a “German rationalist” (p. 43), a historical theologian who writes of “Faustus Socinus the elder” (p. 144), has some things to learn, before venturing into the arena of scholarship with so fully equipped a master as his chosen opponent. Moreover there runs through Prof. Watts’

pages a constant vein of that ready imputation of motive, which is the meanest form of party warfare. There are many weak points in Robertson Smith's case, but if he is to be met in argument, it must be by better means than are adopted here.—On Tuesday, 8th Nov., at the age of 80, died Rev. Dr. Pooley Shulldham Henry, President of the Queen's College, Belfast, from its foundation in 1846, till 1879. He saved First Armagh for the party of subscription. As Commissioner of National Education he did good and life long service to the cause of united secular education. His amiable and dignified manners conciliated general regard.

Dr. Allon's address to the Manchester meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, in which he dealt with Dr. Martineau's *Loss and Gain*, has called forth a reply from Dr. Martineau. The controversy is instructive, and so is the following comment upon it in the *Christian World*:—"Practically it will be found that Dr. Allon and all evangelical divines submit to the authority of Scripture when they find it in harmony with their own conscience, with their own spiritual judgment, with their own Christian sentiment, and then only. We much doubt whether, in the supremely important matter of ethical acquiescence and approbation, their dealing with its authority, in the Old Testament at least, materially differs from Dr. Martineau's."—A pulpit of carved and polished oak, with columns of sycamore, and ornaments of walnut, has been erected in Donegall Street Congregational Church, Belfast, "in memory," as the inscription on the centre panel declares, "of the Rev. J. White, for sixteen years pastor of this church; died 14th April, 1881, aged 63 years. 'Always abounding in the work of the Lord.'"—Rev. J. Bruce Wallace, one of the Congregational ministers of Belfast, has signalled himself by some strong denunciations of Orangeism, and by a forcible repudiation of the extreme statements of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

The founder of the New Connection of General Baptists was Rev. Dan Taylor, of Northowram. He was immersed in the river Idle, in the bleak month of February, 1763; precisely at the same spot four converts were recently immersed, in the presence of

some hundreds of spectators. More than half a century had elapsed since the last employment of this natural baptistery. Running water was once thought essential to baptism; even Milton contended for this point. It is perhaps not generally known that there still exists in the Roman Church a curious "survival" of the ancient practice of baptism in running water. The water with which the infant is sprinkled must run, not simply drop, upon the infant's face, otherwise the baptism is not valid. Hence one reason for the movement of the wet finger in making the sign of the cross.

Moody and Sankey are again conducting an Evangelistic Campaign in England and Scotland, and are to proceed to Ireland. Crowds resort to them, and undoubtedly they do good, for Mr. Moody is a very workmanlike preacher of the Gospel. The net result, however, of their last visit was not very great, or very lasting. Their system supplies rather too close a modern parallel to that of the mediæval missionaries in Russia, who baptized heathens in the Volga, by the ten thousand at once.

The commandship of the Salvation Army seems in a fair way of becoming a hereditary autocracy. William Booth, its founder, is reported as saying: "I am not so much a general as an emperor; all money is paid to me, all property vested in me, and in my son after me." It is but fair to add that the accounts of the Army are audited by the Basinghall Street firm of accountants, Josiah Beddow and Son; and that General Booth lives by the sale of hymn-books which he has compiled; no member of his family derives any payment from the funds of the Army, save his eldest son and intended successor, Bramwell Booth.—It would seem that the Army is prospering in worldly wealth, if it be true, as announced, that it is about to acquire, at a cost of £20,000, what was formerly the London Orphan Asylum at Clapton. The Army will use the asylum as its Barracks.

Little has been recently heard of the outlandish community, led by Mrs. Girling, calling themselves "Perfectionists," and claiming to be "children of God, who cannot sin." The Salvation Army has occupied the curiosity of that portion of the public which delights

in religious novelty and eccentricity, and the Perfectionist camp in the New Forest has been forgotten. One who lately paid a visit to Hordle, reports that the camp still exists in that locality, and that the inmates of its tents number about a score of men and 50 women.

Coptic Christianity has ventured upon the suicidal experiment of attacking Muhammadanism with Muhammad's own methods of conversion. By command of King John of Abyssinia, all Moslems and Pagans in his kingdom have been forcibly baptised into the Christian faith. Even severer measures are to be taken against heresy than against infidelity. Romish and Protestant missionaries are banished the realm, and if any Abyssinians resort to them upon the frontier the penalty is to be the loss of a leg. We shudder at the barbarity, and are lost in amazement at the folly, of such procedure. But is not this exactly the treatment by which Jews were Christianised, and heretics paralysed, in the days of the absolute sway over Europe of the Church which never errs?—The Muhammadans are not slow to retort with similar measures. A journal of Alexandria, *L'Egypte*, has been suppressed for speaking of Muhammad as a false prophet, and the death of the editor is decreed by the fanatics of a Mosque at Cairo. The editor, on appealing to the

French Government, was advised to leave the country, and did so.

Spiritualism must be a growing thing, judging from the favourable manner in which it was discussed at the Church Congress. A journal of Spiritualism advertises for half-a-crown a collection of 500 "communicated" songs, glees, plays, &c., whose "unprecedented number, inexhaustible variety, incomparable lyrical beauty, corroborate the spirit's assertion, that the author is Shakspeare. No other mind could have produced them."

Some time ago we published an article on Sacramental Wine, and since then communications have reached us from different quarters, which indicate that there is a growing desire, in various churches, for the introduction at the Lord's Table of a wine that cannot be classed among intoxicating drinks. From five firms we have received advertisements of what purports, in each case, to be "unfermented wine," and from the testimonials appended, all of these seem to be in use for Sacramental purposes. On the other hand, we are assured that "unfermented wine" is a contradiction in terms. A correspondent of the *Church Times* thinks that the Fiji Islanders, among whom intoxicants are prohibited, have solved the problem by the employment of "the very weakest claret and water."

DENOMINATIONAL.

AMERICA.—A statement, to be received with caution, appears in the *Boston Journal*, respecting a recent interview with Rev. O. B. Frothingham, for twenty years a prominent leader of the Free Religious Movement. Mr. Frothingham is represented as saying that the work he has been doing "appears to lead to nothing, and may have been founded on mistaken premises." He has resolved, therefore, to "stop denying and wait for more light."

ENGLAND.—The Provincial Meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association has been held at Leicester, and was well attended. At a public breakfast, in connection with it, a Congregationalist minister, Rev. J. Wood, referred to the good work done by the Unitarian body, which body he believed had beneficially influenced other churches to an extent beyond their own knowledge.—A new gothic Church has been opened for the Bowl Alley

Congregation at Hull; a Swedenborgian minister was advertised to take part in the proceedings.—At Derby, Rev. J. Ashby, of the same religious body, delivered to the Philosophical and Musical Society of Friargate Chapel (Unitarian) a lecture on "The Remarkable Life of the Seer of Stockholm."—The ranks of the laity have lost during the past month Mr. Samuel Bulley, of Liverpool, who died on 7 Nov., aet. 70, a Unitarian by conviction, and a most cultivated and estimable man; Mr. Charles Fortescue Tagart, F.S.A., died 16 Nov., aet. 65, a well-known London lawyer, and brother of the late Rev. Edward Tagart; and Mr. Joseph Henry Nettlefold, of Birmingham, died 22 Nov., aet. 54, senior member of the firm of screw manufacturers, in which Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain is a partner.—On 16 Nov., died also, at the age of 71, Mr. William Rithbone Greg, author of the *Creed of*

Christendom, a remarkable work, which anticipated in England many of the more recent rationalistic criticisms of New Testament problems.

FRANCE.—The Liberal element appears strongly in the opening addresses of the Faculty of Protestant Theology in the University of France. This Faculty, which has its lecture-rooms in the Boulevard Arago, Paris, is an amalgamation of the Reformed Faculty of Paris with the French Lutheran

Faculty, transferred from Strassburg. The Dean, Lichtenberger, delivered a noble allocution in vindication of the place of liberal theological studies, in an age when materialism is rampant. The Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Bonet-Maury, an avowed Unitarian, contributed an able address, showing the patriotic side of early Italian efforts for religious reform, as illustrated in the career of Arnold of Brescia, a thinker who owed much to French influence.

IRELAND.

The high office of Solicitor-General for Ireland has been conferred upon A. M. Porter, Esq., Q.C., eldest son of the late Rev. J. Scott Porter, and a consistent member of the Nonsubscribing Church. Mr. Porter's appointment has been unanimously welcomed in Ulster, where his high character and brilliant career are viewed with just pride by all parties.—It is with great grief that we report a temporary cessation of public work on the part of one of the soundest lawyers and most eminent pleaders at the Irish bar, W. D. Andrews Esq., Q.C. We are led however to believe that by taking in time the malady from which he suffers, a disease of the eyes, a complete restoration may be affected.

BELFAST.—During the recent visit of the Lord Lieutenant to this town the honour of Knighthood was conferred upon the Mayor, a member of the Second Congregation. Sir Edward Porter Cowan, J.P. is not only the first Liberal Mayor that Belfast has seen for a very long period, but he has just been unanimously requested to serve in that high office for a second year.—In preparation for the Communion Sunday at Mountpottinger, an excellent address was issued by the pastor, Rev. J. J. Wright, thus referring to the ordinance: "He, whose disciples we are, left us this memorial of himself that, so often as we, in prayerful faith, made use of it, we might renew our covenant with one another, with him, and with our God. In his name let us desire that our Communion may, by added grace, make us to live more worthily in this lower home of the Father's."

DUBLIN.—At the recent examinations in Trinity College, Mr. Classon Porter, youngest son of Rev. Classon Porter,

Larne, and grandson of the late Rev. William Porter, Limavady, has, at the close of his senior sophistic year, been awarded the First Gold Medal in History and Political Science.

MISSION SUNDAY.—The Mission Committee of the Nonsubscribing Association has issued a circular inviting Ministers and Congregations to devote Sunday the 18th December to the consideration of our Missionary Work and Opportunities; and to take a collection on that day in aid of the nucleus of a Mission Fund. Contributions are already promised from First Belfast, Comber, and Dromore. The arrangements for the Affirmative Lectures, to be delivered early next year, will involve expenditure, which can only be met by liberal collections. The series of Lectures is as follows: (1) "Christ's Relation to God," by Rev. W. Napier; (2) "The Paternal Character of God," by Rev. J. Miskimmin; (3) "Human Nature," by Rev. D. Thompson; (4) "The Cross in its Relation to Sin and Sorrow," by Rev. J. A. Crozier, B.A.; (5) "Faith and Works," by Rev. T. Dunkerley, B.A.; (6) "Retribution," by Rev. C. J. M'Alister; "Christian Doctrine as affected by New Testament Revision," by Rev. A. Gordon, M.A.; (8) "The Principles of Nonsubscription," by Rev. D. Gordon.

NEWRY.—During the recent violent storm, a large stack of chimneys on the house of Thos. Irvine, Esq., J.P., at Courtenay Hill, fell through the roof, above the bedroom where Mr. and Mrs. Irvine were sleeping, and carried away the floor of the room beneath, and the furniture of both apartments, with Mr. and Mrs. Irvine, into the cellar beneath. Fortunately Mr. Irvine was unhurt; Mrs. Irvine remained insensible until 12 o'clock the next day.